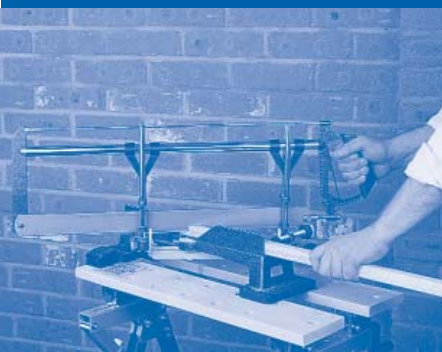


# BUILD YOUR SKILLS

## MOULDINGS CHECKLIST

- Timber mouldings are strips of softwood, hardwood or medium-density fibreboard (MDF) that have been machined to a particular profile or have an decorative pattern embossed on them.
- They can be divided into four broad groups - room mouldings, trim and cover mouldings, decorative panel and frame mouldings, and functional mouldings.
- Room mouldings include skirting boards, architraves, window sill boards, cornices, wall cladding, dados and picture rails and staircase mouldings.
- Trim and cover mouldings are used in a variety of ways to finish off edges and cover joints.
- Panel and frame mouldings are used to create decorative effects on wall and furniture surfaces, or to frame pictures.
- Functional mouldings do specific jobs, such as making dowel joints.



## WORKING WITH MOULDINGS

### Cutting to length

- Since most mouldings are used for their decorative effect, accurate and clean cutting is essential and your saws must be sharp. If you're using hand tools, select a tenon saw for larger mouldings and a fine-toothed Gents saw for small ones. Use power saws only for larger mouldings.
- Always secure mouldings before cutting them. Hold larger mouldings in a vice or portable workbench, and use a bench hook for smaller ones. [PIC 1]
- Since precise lengths are often essential, always mark your cutting lines clearly with a knife, and saw on the waste side of the line.

### Cutting angles

- Many mouldings need cutting at an angle to form a frame or to enable individual components to fit together neatly. For cuts across the width of the moulding, a mitre box will help you create reasonably accurate 45° mitres.
- For cuts through the depth of the moulding (for example, to mitre the ends of meeting lengths of skirting board), use a power saw with a tilting soleplate. Set it to 45° and check the accuracy of the angle on scrap wood first.
- For really accurate cuts, use a compound mitre saw - an adjustable metal saw guide on which a fine-toothed saw is mounted. This can make cuts through the depth of quite tall mouldings as well as cuts across the width. [PIC 2]

### Fixing mouldings

- Large room mouldings such as skirtings and architraves are generally nailed in place, with the nail heads punched in and filled over. You may prefer to fix mouldings such as picture rails to walls with screws and wallplugs.
- Smaller panel and trim mouldings can be pinned in position to wooden substrates, but it is best to drill slim pilot holes to avoid any risk of splitting. Use pins to secure the corner mitre joints of picture frames too.
- Mouldings can also be glued in position, but bear in mind that removing them will be more difficult than prising off a nailed moulding. Use PVA woodworking adhesive for wood-to-wood joints, and a panel adhesive such as Wickes' Forget Nails to stick mouldings to plaster surfaces. [PIC 3]

## TYPES OF MOULDINGS

Most timber mouldings are produced using a machine called a spindle moulder. Fast-spinning cutters give the moulding its characteristic profile as the square or rectangular planed stock is fed into the machine.

Large mouldings such as skirtings are usually machined from softwood or MDF. The latter material has the advantage of being dimensionally stable and free from knots, splits, shakes and warping. MDF mouldings are available pre-primed.

Mouldings with a smaller cross-section are usually machined from inexpensive hardwoods such as ramin, which holds edge details better than softwood on a small scale. They are displayed in store in a full-length pigeon hole dispenser.

### Room mouldings

Skirting boards and architraves have a practical as well as a decorative purpose. Skirting boards prevent damage to the lowest part of the wall plaster, while architraves conceal the join between the wall and the door frame.

Wickes stocks softwood and MDF skirting boards in the traditional torus pattern, with a choice of two heights, and in a plain chamfered pattern 70mm high. Also available are hardwood torus skirting 170mm high, and a dual-purpose softwood skirting 95mm high which reveals a different profile according to which way round it is fixed.

Architrave mouldings come in torus, ogee and chamfered profiles in softwood, in torus and chamfered profile in pre-primed MDF, and in ogee only in hardwood. Picture and dado rails are also available in all three materials. Softwood cladding for walls and ceilings comes in four profiles; traditional TGV (tongued, grooved and V-jointed) cladding, plain constructional cladding, Heritage cladding with its moulded profile, and shiplap cladding for exterior use. The boards are sold in packs of four or five for ease of handling. Staircase mouldings are speciality mouldings used to assemble replacement balustrades. They include vertical newel posts, handrail mouldings, baluster spindles, bottom rails and special fittings to turn a balustrade through a quarter turn. These matched components make replacing a balustrade a simple and straightforward job.

### Trim and cover mouldings

As their name implies, these mouldings are used for a range of edge-trimming and joint-concealing jobs. The range includes plain rounded, rebated and decorative moulded edge cover strips, angle and hockey-stick mouldings and quadrant and scotia mouldings. Most are ramin, and generally come in 2.4m lengths.

### Panel and frame mouldings

These mouldings are also used in a variety of ways, for example to give a plain door a panelled finish or to create panelled effects on wall and ceiling surfaces. Some have machined profiles, others have a decorative pattern embossed into their surface. Many of the cover mouldings stocked can also be used in this way, and Wickes stocks roundel corner blocks as an alternative to using mitred corner joints.

Finally, a range of picture frame mouldings enable you to make up matching picture frames to any size you require.

### Functional mouldings

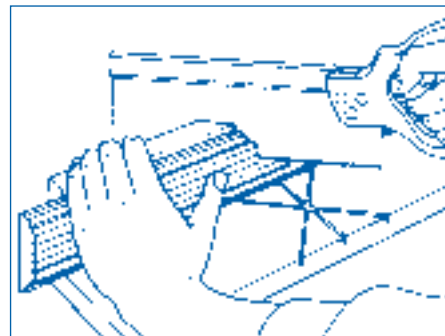
There are several mouldings which have a purely functional use, rather than any decorative purpose. These include dowel, available in a range of sizes for jobs ranging from making dowel joints to creating hanging pegs and clothes rails, and glass bead for use as a neater alternative to putty in glazed doors and windows.

There is also plain ramin stripwood in both square and rectangular cross-sections for use in all sorts of small-scale woodworking projects.

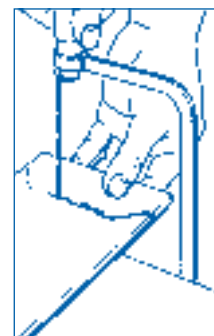
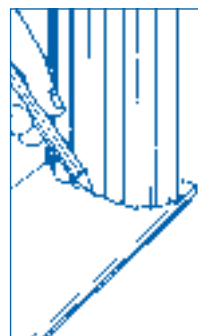
### Putting up picture and dado rails

One of the most popular jobs involving mouldings is adding a picture or dado rail to a room so that each area of the wall surface can be given a different decorative finish.

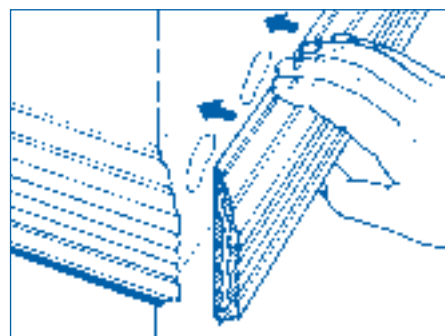
The secret of success with this job is to draw a truly horizontal pencil guide line round the room. It is then a simple matter to work round the room, measuring, cutting and fitting each length of rail in turn. For a quick result you can use Forget Nails adhesive instead of screws and wallplugs or masonry nails.



**1** Start fixing the rail on the room's longest wall. Use a 45° angled joint, not a butt joint, between lengths.



**2** At internal corners, scribe the end of the first length on the next wall and cut it with a coping saw.



**3** At external corners, mitre the joint. Use filler to neaten the joint if your mitre cuts aren't perfect.

## PROBLEM SOLVER

**[P]** A gap keeps opening up along the top of the skirting boards, and any filler used simply falls out.

**[S]** Fill the gap with non-setting acrylic decorator's mastic instead of hard-setting filler. If the room is being redecorated with wallpaper, trim the paper so it rests on the top edge of the skirting board and hides the join.

**[P]** The mitre joint on an external corner of a picture rail has a wedge-shaped gap that's hard to fill.

**[S]** Cut external mitre joints to just under 45° so the joint is tightly closed on the outside of the corner but is slightly open on its inside angle.

**[P]** The wall to which a new skirting is being fitted is not straight.

**[S]** Use screws and wallplugs to fix the board. The screws will force the board to match the profile of the wall as they are driven in.

**[P]** Getting the top section of a door architrave moulding to fit is proving difficult to achieve.

**[S]** Cut accurate mitres on one end of each of the two side sections, and fit them to the frame. Then hold a length of moulding upside down on top of the side mouldings and mark the top corner positions on it. Cut inward-facing mitres at these points.

**[P]** The glazing bead in a glazed internal door keeps splitting as the fixing nails are driven in.

**[S]** Drill slim pilot holes for the pins through each length of bead before starting to fix it in place. Use a little bedding putty or glazing sealant behind the bead to prevent the glass from rattling.

Every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the information provided but product specifications and construction techniques can change and Wickes Building Supplies can accept no responsibility for such changes. The information should therefore be taken as general guidance only.

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